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INFO RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY 0375

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 002294

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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/BSC JANINA SLATTERY AND WHA/AND LOURDES  
CUE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/21/2017

TAGS: PREL CJAN ASEC KJUS SP VE AR

SUBJECT: SPAIN SYMPATHETIC TO U.S. IN ARGENTINE FRACTURE

REF: A. STATE 168617

1B. BUENOS AIRES 2360

Classified By: DCM HUGO LLORENS FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (C) Deputy Chief of Mission spoke December 20 to Spanish Director General of Foreign Policy for Latin America Javier Sandomingo and presented points in ref A. The DCM expressed concern over the limitations placed on the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires (ref B), saying the restrictions served neither U.S. nor Argentine nor, indeed, Spanish interests in supporting Argentine democracy. Sandomingo agreed Argentine President Cristina Kirchner's government had made a big mistake in lashing out at the USG over a judicial matter. Sandomingo noted Argentina had more to lose from weakening the U.S. relationship. The Argentines had panicked and over-reacted when they should have dialogued. As time passed, he thought the GOA would realize its mistake and acknowledge the arrests of foreign agents were a judicial matter, and the Argentine-U.S. relationship would gradually normalize. The DCM asked Sandomingo if there was anything Spain could do to facilitate the process, either by instructing Spanish Ambassador to Argentina Estrella or by raising the matter with Argentine Ambassador to Spain Bettini. Sandomingo said he would have no problem contacting Ambassador Estrella.

12. (C) Sandomingo further noted Cristina Kirchner might be even more erratic and temperamental ("inconsistente") than her husband Nestor, which was saying a lot. On the positive side, he felt Cristina might be more positively disposed to the United States. He mentioned that as a senator and First Lady she had reached out and established relationships in New York and Washington. Cristina had a greater interest than her predecessor in developing the U.S. relationship, and Sandomingo hoped she would "swing back" from her anti-U.S. stance.

AGUIRRE